

Farmers' Champion

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CHECK RAVAGES OF INSECTS

Nighthawk Devours Many Mosquitoes
and Feeds Exclusively on Bugs—
Man's True Friend.

Mr. Treadwell of the Boston Society of Natural History reports that he fed a young robin sixty-eight angle or earthworms in one day. A young crow will eat twice its weight of cutworms a day. Think of what this means to the gardener, young or old! "Could we grow anything at all without the help of the birds?" exclaims a little boy-gardener to whom I told it.

In the crop of a nighthawk were found 500 mosquitoes. That bird did the duty of tenebre screens! Think of the discomfort, to say nothing of the disease, he prevented!

In view of these facts one is almost willing to accept the statement of a well-known French scientist, who has asserted that without birds to



The Nighthawk.

check the ravages of insects human life would vanish from this planet in the space of nine years. But for the vegetation, the insects would perish; but for the insects, the birds would perish, and but for the birds vegetation would be destroyed. Nature has, therefore, formed a delicate balance of power which cannot be disturbed without bringing great loss and unhappiness to the world.—Home Progress Magazine.

PRUNING OF TREES PROPERLY

Importance Not Fully Appreciated by
Many Until One Observes
Unightly Docking.

The importance of properly pruning the trees on our streets and about the home is not fully appreciated until one observes the unsightly "docking" practiced by some of our well-meaning citizens, says the Farmers' Guide. "As the twig is bent so the tree is inclined." This saying, familiar to all, might be recast to read: "As the twigs are cut so the tree is inclined or given form." We mean to say by this that intelligent pruning may mold the tree into almost any desired form.

Even the deaptheaded poplar, which, by the way, is a stately and beautiful tree when properly placed and cared for, can be so pruned as to produce a pleasing effect if taken in time and pruned each year.

The most common error is to neglect the pruning until the tree has become ill-shaped, and then to attempt by the drastic method of cutting off many large limbs or the entire trunk to give the symmetry and beauty desired. Such methods seldom bring the desired results, and generally leave the tree so badly maimed and disfigured that it is removed, either by man or by the destroying fungi which enter the tree where large pruning wounds have been made.

PRUNE THE DORMANT GRAPES

At Any Other Time Upward Flow of
Sap Is So Strong That It Will
Cause "Bleeding."

Grape vines, unlike many other vines, trees and shrubs, can be pruned without injury only when they are in a deep dormant condition. At any other time the upward flow of sap is so strong that it will flow out of the wound and cause what is called

bleeding, which impairs the vitality of the plant.

The time to prune the grape vines is soon after they have dropped their leaves, and the whole plant becomes dormant, preferably with a falling temperature before midwinter. If pruning is done while the leaves remain on some of the branches, and the weather is mild, sap is liable to flow the remaining branches and cause swelling of buds, which will be caught by the frost. The work must not be delayed till late winter or early spring, since the very first worm spell will cause the sap to flow and the wounds to bleed.

In the northern and central latitudes from the middle of November till the last part of January is the best time for the work.

Cover Crops for Orchards.

In Michigan peach growers sow oats and barley. These have been satisfactory, but now sand vetch is most popular. It makes a mammoth growth and adds considerable nitrogen to the soil. These crops act as a blanket to hold the leaves and snow, thus preventing deep freezing and root injury. In spring cover crops are turned under.

Inspecting Fruit for Storage.

Make a most thorough inspection of all fruit and vegetables before placing them in storage pits or cellar bins. The least abrasion of the skin on fruits will cause rot later on, and a speck of rot at this time will mean an entirely ruined product in midwinter, to say nothing of the other products it may contaminate and spoil.

AMONG SMALL FRUIT BUSHES

After All Danger of "Bleeding" Is Past
Grape Vines Should Be Pruned
—Other Details.

(By R. G. WEATHERSTONE.)

With the exception of raspberries, which should be attended to early in the spring, all the small fruit bushes should be pruned, sprayed and fertilized during the late fall months. This will include the gooseberries, currants, blackberries, grape vines, etc.

After all danger of "bleeding" is past, the grape vines should be carefully pruned and all posts and trellises straightened up, which will guard against doing this work in the spring at a time it will damage them. Old straw or corn stalks make a good fertilizer here and then a goodly percent of common wood ashes should be supplied to furnish the desired muriate of potash, which will keep down the too rank growth, thus guarding against fungous diseases and rot and giving the fruit an excellent flavor and good size.

All fruit bushes or orchard trees that are where the rabbits can reach them, should be wrapped in thick paper, gunny sacks, corn stalks, screen wire or the regular tree protectors made of veneer, this protection extending 18 or 24 inches from the ground, so the snows of winter will not enable the animals to gnaw the bark from the trees.

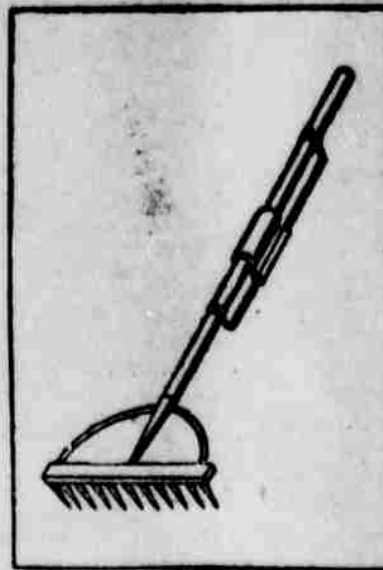
Young and tender fruit plants should be carefully bent down to the ground, a quantity of straw placed on them and a few spadefuls of dirt carefully spread over them to protect them from severe freezing till spring, when this straw may be scattered around them for fertilizer.

GRIP ATTACHMENT TO RAKE

Device Invented by New Jersey Man
Prevents Blistered Hands—Move-
ment Is Limited.

Any person who has ever used a rake will recall, if they stop to think, that the raking was usually done with one hand. The other hand was used merely as a sliding grip to guide the implement. After a few hours of this sort of work a person who is not accustomed to it is apt to find blisters on the hand that played the guide. To obviate this a New Jersey man has designed a sliding grip that is attached to the rake handle. A long

piece of wire, with its ends coiled



Rake Attachment.

around the handle, extends parallel to the latter for some distance. The grip, which may be of rubber or cork, or any suitable substance, slides back and forth on the handle and the wire. This wire acts as a stop so that the movement of the rake is limited to a reasonable space.

CARE FOR SPRAYING OUTFITS

Pumps Should Be Stored in Winter
Where They Will Keep Dry—
Clean Them Thoroughly.

(By F. L. WASHBURN, Minnesota Ex-
periment Station.)

In leaving spraying pumps for the winter see in the first place that they are stored under cover where they will be kept dry. Clean them thoroughly, taking particular pains to drain out any water which may remain in the pumps and from the jacket of the gasoline engine if power pump is used, bearing in mind that a valuable engine can be practically ruined by water being left in the water jacket and freezing.

A liberal application of engine oil to all the working parts of the engine in the fall will do much to keep off rust. Nozzle and hose should be cleaned out and dried. Any wooden barrels or tanks used as reservoirs should be put away from the sun, preferably in a moist place.

If any insecticides are left over, put them on a shelf out of the way, properly labeled. Remember that paris green deteriorates by being kept in the open air. Arsenate of lead, which one desires to keep for the following year should have a good covering of water to prevent its drying.

Danger From Rotten Apples.

One of the first things to be done is to pick up and burn or bury all refuse fruit in the orchard which is decaying or entirely rotten. These form veritable hot beds for the numerous orchard pests to hibernates in during the winter months, being also ideal places in which the same pests deposit their eggs for next season's hatching, and by shaking off all the apples that are still clinging to the branches of the trees and picking up all that are under them, next year's crop of orchard pests will be considerably cut down.

DAILY DIET HINTS

By DR. T. J. ALLEN
Food Specialist.

ABNORMAL APPETITES.

"The parents ate sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." This suggests how the most deep-seated idiosyncrasies, often making intolerable the smallest portion of a certain food, may be established. But abnormal appetite, for a particular food, for a stimulant, or for an excessive amount of food—or insatiable appetite—may be established by irregular eating, by harboring an unnatural longing, unsatisfied, or by defective nutrition, during gestation. This knowledge, with the exercise of reasonable care and judgment, may prevent undesirable hereditary tendencies which a lifetime of effort cannot overcome—a fact which the unfortunate subject of such a legacy needs also to recognize, and the physician, as an aid to patience and the avoidance of extremes.